



SOCIAL WORK PROFESSIONAL ADVISORY GROUP OF THE COMMISSIONED  
CORPS OF THE US PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE

# SWPAG NEWSLETTER

VOLUME V, ISSUE I

MARCH 2013

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### 2013 SWPAG Meetings

27 March at 1400 EST  
29 May at 1400 EST  
31 July at 1400 EST  
25 Sept at 1400 EST  
4 Dec at 1400 EST

SWPAG Newsletter  
created by  
CDR Julie Niven, LCSW,  
DCSW, MAC



## **Congratulations to the 2013 SWPAG Junior and Senior Social Workers of the Year!**

### ***CDR Stacey Evans: Senior Social Worker of the Year***

(photo unavailable)

CDR Evans is presently assigned to the Department of Defense (DoD), Defense Center of Excellence (DCoE), Deployment Health Clinical Center (DHCC), Specialty Care Directorate (SC), where she is the deputy branch chief for the Clinical Recommendations Section and the lead for the DoD Integrated, Mental Health Strategy #26 (translation of research into clinical practice).

CDR Evans has been instrumental in providing timely delivery for several high visibility products for SC to include the first ever data call request for inputs from the Armed Services for their prioritization of research needs; as well as a Joint Incentive Fund proposal to develop a pilot for Integrated Mental Health (IMHS), Strategic Action (SA) #26. CDR Evans is the DoD lead for the Health Executive Counsel's SA#26 initiative working with multiple agencies and senior leadership at the Department of Veterans Affairs.

As a career counselor, CDR Evans has positively impacted the careers of over 200 officers. She demonstrated excellent leadership skills while serving as Chair of the Health Services Officer Appointment Board, as well as president of the District of Columbia, Commissioned Officers Association Metropolitan Branch. As a Senior Instructional Officer, CDR Evans played a significant role in the development and implementation of the two-week USPHS Officers Basic Course (OBC), which, since 2007, has positively impacted each new officer called to active duty.

CDR Evans has always remained grounded, resilient and dedicated to the mission before her which is why she is a tremendous asset to the social work profession and the USPHS.



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# from the *SWPAG Chair*

...CDR Kristin Kelly, LCSW

It is truly an honor to serve you as the Social Work Professional Advisory Group (PAG) Chair in 2013. In this edition of the newsletter, I would like to outline my vision for the PAG and introduce myself.

## **Vision:**

I envision fostering an environment within the PAG that supports its mission of providing sound information and recommendations to all levels of U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS) leadership on discipline specific matters. My goal is to continue to increase our profile within USPHS by pulling from the vast knowledge of our membership. It is not just my PAG, so I want to encourage open and honest dialogue between members and all levels of PAG leadership. I will also continue to work with members to expand the PAG and ensure the needs of members are heard so the larger mission is accomplished.

I would also like to use technology available to increase engagement with members, especially those in field locations. This will afford everyone the opportunity to access resources and encourage a sense of community within the PAG. The wealth of knowledge and experience among the PAG membership is one of its greatest assets. Utilizing each other as resources will only assist in advancing the PAG goals and mission.

## **Background:**

I currently serve as the Personnel Management Officer within the Program Support Center (PSC)/ Federal Occupational Health (FOH). This position includes being the USPHS Liaison for PSC. Although my current position is primarily administrative and based in Human Resources, I am a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and have over 10 years of experience working in both clinical and governmental settings.

I received my Masters of Social Work degree from Virginia Commonwealth University and my Bachelors in Human Services Counseling from Old Dominion University. In addition to my professional license, I am a member of the Academy of Certified Social Workers, a Board Certified Diplomat in Clinical Social Work and a Work/Life Certified Professional. Lastly, I hold a

...Continued on page 5



## ***How Do You Plan to Improve Your Image in 2013?***

*Happy Spring!* I hope everyone enjoyed happy holidays with family and friends. Can you believe that three months of the new year have already passed? I honestly don't know where time goes.

I wonder — what are your plans for improving your image in 2013? Which image you might ask? Your image as a social worker, a USPHS officer, an individual, and a team player!

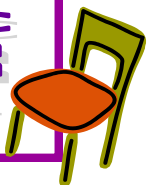
Everyday we have the opportunity to tell others about ourselves whether we utter a word or not. Our appearance, the way we carry ourselves, and of course what we say, and even more importantly what we do communicates who we are to strangers, friends, co-workers, and loved ones. What image are you portraying? Is it the one you want to portray?

Improving our image is in some ways simple stress management. The techniques we use to help manage our stress can have a positive impact on our self-image. When we think positively, we project a positive attitude. When we exercise, we project a positive appearance. When we act responsibly towards others and ourselves, we project a level of respect that is admired by others. When we accept imperfections and recognize our personal sphere of control we communicate acceptance of self and others which is often a magnet to others around us.

Here's wishing you a clear focus on career, home, individual, and group goals this year!

Yours in Service, CDR Julie A. Niven

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## USPHS Social Worker Join Forces with NASW to Support Veterans and Military Families

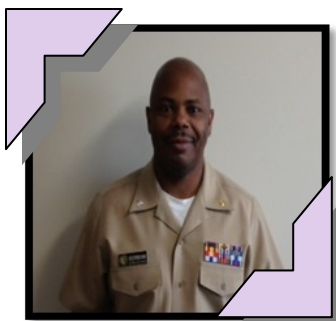
*Submitted by CDR Dwayne Buckingham, Ph.D., LCSW, BCD*

In accordance with the DoD-PHS Partnership in Mental Health Initiative, CDR Dwayne Buckingham is currently detailed to Walter Reed National Military Medical Center (WRNMMC), Psychology Department where he serves as Service Chief of Resiliency and Psychological Health Service.

As Service Chief, CDR Buckingham is responsible for directly supervising a multi-disciplinary staff of nine civilian and military psychologists, social workers, educators, psychiatric technicians, administrative officers and mental health specialists who provide targeted clinical services and prevention focused programs that promote wellness, readiness and adaptability within the military environment. He serves as a resiliency subject matter expert and directly oversees all aspects of educational and outreach services provided by staff.

CDR Buckingham has established a reputation for being one of the sharpest clinical social workers within the Behavioral Health Directorate and Commissioned Corps. With an unwavering commitment to ensure that veterans and military families receive quality mental health treatment, CDR Buckingham submitted a proposal entitled, ***evidence-Based PTSD Intervention-Based PTSD Intervention*** (NASW) in order to America's Wounded Warriors

As a proud member of onstrated exceptional commit-workers so that they are prepared incredible sacrifices for the



***“Veterans in Treatment: Providing Evi-tion”*** to the National Association of Social highlight the unique needs and strengths of and military families.

Joining Forces since 2011, NASW has demment to educating and training all social to meet the needs of those who have made United States.

On February 20, 2013, informed him that his proposal was selected as ***one of five*** on-line courses for Continuing Education Module on Service Members, Veterans, and Their Families.

CDR Buckingham's 120 minute training module will target clinical social workers in the mental health arena who are committed to providing evidence-based PTSD treatment to returning veterans and their families. It aims to provide a basic understanding of major mental health issues and psychotherapy practices as they relate to returning veterans and their families.

The training module will be available for all social workers to include those who work specifically with veterans and military families as well as private practitioners, clinical social workers, agency social workers, policy practitioners, educators, and researchers.

Social workers who complete all five on-line training modules will receive a professional Credential for Social Work with Veterans and Military Families. This credential will be offered free for one year to all NASW members and is geared towards social workers that work primarily with service members, veterans, or their loved ones.

CDR Buckingham is excited about this wonderful training opportunity and is proud to represent the Commissioned Corps in supporting the Joining Forces Initiative. His on-line training module will be available in 2013.

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CDR Evans is an outstanding social worker and officer who constantly exceeds expected levels of performance; she is a team player and lends assistance wherever needed. She has consistently demonstrated an ability to sustain a high level of performance in her daily responsibilities and simultaneously provide exceptional support to several U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps responsibilities.

### ***LCDR Tarsha Cavanaugh: Junior Social Worker of the Year***

LCDR Cavanaugh was nominated for her exceptional leadership qualities as a Senior Public Health Analyst within the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), Office of Women's Health (OWH). She serves as the lead advisor on subject matters related to violence prevention, oral health, veterans and tribal women's health. LCDR Cavanaugh is the HRSA Women's Health Coordinating Committee, Violence Prevention Workgroup Chair and provides leadership in the development of priorities and partnerships related to violence prevention. Most recently, she has taken the initiative to establish partnerships related to behavioral health and its impact on women, veterans and trauma-informed care. In addition, LCDR Cavanaugh is often called upon to respond to HRSA leadership inquiries, requests and opportunities related to violence prevention among women, children and families.



In 2013, LCDR Cavanaugh initiated the development and implementation of a HRSA Project Action Charter, *Veterans Trauma-Informed Care Protocols Initiative*, to identify trauma-informed approaches, resources and training to support HRSA funded health centers providing primary care to veterans. She co-hosted a pre-conference session on *Home Visitation and Domestic Violence: State-level Strategies to Meet the Federal Benchmarks*, presented a poster on *Understanding the Department of Health and Human Service Women's Preventive Services Guidelines: A Focus on Domestic Violence Screening and Counseling* and co-authored a blog on *Bullying Prevention: Let's Be a Voice for Change*. As a subject matter expert on violence prevention, LCDR Cavanaugh also engaged in an interactive discussion with residents of Cook Hall, Howard University in Washington, DC to raise awareness of domestic violence among college-aged women. Further, LCDR Cavanaugh facilitated collaboration between HRSA's Maternal Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting Team and Administration for Children and Families' Family Violence Prevention and Service Act Program to establish coordinated technical assistance for grantees regarding the new domestic violence benchmark. Finally, as HS PAC Communications Subcommittee Chair, LCDR Cavanaugh recommended the utilization of the HSO Weekly Announcements to showcase Health Service Officers contributions in addressing components of the National Prevention Strategy.

LCDR Cavanaugh's expertise has led to greater awareness and integration of violence prevention as a key component for program planning and evaluation across HHS and HRSA. She is committed to ensuring the health, safety and well-being of underserved women, children and families and upholding the mission of the U.S. Public Health Service.

***Way to Go!***



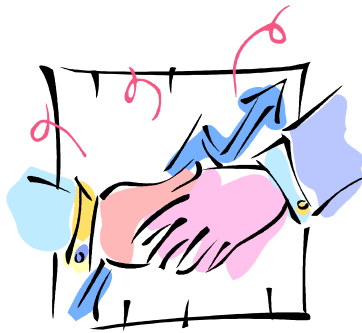
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Certificate in Human Resource Development from Villanova University.

I have been an active member of the SWPAG since joining the USPHS in 2006. I served as a member of the Awards Subcommittee from 2006-2010. I was also the PAG Secretary in 2008. In 2010, I took over as the Awards Subcommittee Chair, where I served a two year term. In 2012, I received the honor of being selected Chair-elect in which I served under the tutelage of CDR Todd Lennon. I believe my active involvement provides me a unique understanding of the PAG and its operating requirements.

In the spirit of collaboration and sharing of information, I would encourage you to try to make our PAG calls every other month. We will be sharing important updates during those meetings and offering a time to answer any questions brought forward by membership. Further, my hope is to provide some brief educational presentations by various members during these meetings. If you are interested in sharing information with your fellow PAG members, please contact me to discuss. Many of you have my contact information, but in case, you can reach me via phone at 301-492-5438 or email at [kristin.kelly@foh.hhs.gov](mailto:kristin.kelly@foh.hhs.gov).

In conclusion, please know I am truly appreciative of this opportunity and I hope to serve you well. Please do not hesitate to contact me with information and ideas to advance the PAG and the visibility of social workers in the USPHS.



*...CDR Kristin Kelly, LCSW*



**Happy Spring!**



# Plan Your Own Promotion Ceremony!

## Plan Your Own Promotion Ceremony!

*Submitted by CDR Todd Lennon, LCSW*



Sometime in June we will learn about this year's promotion selections. Because our officers are assigned to a variety of agencies and practice settings, how those promotions are recognized and celebrated varies, too. Some HHS agencies and COA chapters host large group promotion ceremonies. I have heard that our colleagues assigned to DoD have military-style ceremonies that are focused on one officer. I planned and hosted my own ceremony last year.

There were two reasons I planned my own ceremony. First, with my effective date of 1 April, I didn't want to go through a ceremony the summer before and have to take off the new rank for the next nine months. Second, I wanted to have a more personal ceremony that I could invite my friends and family to. I think a more personal ceremony raises the profile and significance of the promotion.

The ceremony was held in my office's conference room and emergency operations center on the first business day after my effective date. I asked a junior officer friend of mine to emcee the event using a script I wrote based on other scripts I collected. I was honored that RADM Pete Delany—the highest-ranking active duty social worker in uniform—agreed to officiate and RADM Kerry Paige Nessler—USPHS Chief Nurse Officer and a colleague—read the promotion order. My boss said a few words and his boss (representing HRSA) also provided remarks. My father—a retired pastor—offered the invocation and benediction.

When it was time to frock me, my wife and RADM Delany put my new soft boards on. My eldest daughter brought me my newly striped service dress blue jacket and my two preschool daughters brought me my new cover. After I thanked my family, friends, and colleagues for their part in helping me achieve this milestone in my career, everyone enjoyed a catered lunch.

Yes, planning my own ceremony was a lot of work. Yes, serving lunch to 30 guests and paying for parking for some of them added up. But it was a wonderful celebration of an achievement that deserves it. My encouragement to those who are looking forward to promotion this year is to consider giving your achievement the recognition it deserves. Make your ceremony personal and memorable for all. I am happy to share my script, program, e-invitation link, and other advice if you would like the benefit of my experience.



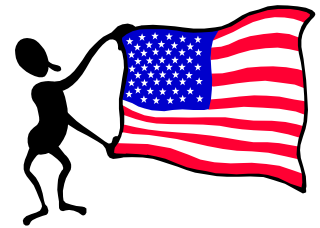
*An example of a ceremony program*



*The Official Party*



*Refreshments table*



*USPHS social workers attending (L-R CAPT Dan Kavanaugh, RADM Pete Delany, CDR Lennon, CAPT Gail Hamilton, LCDR Tarsha Cavanaugh, missing is LCDR Kristin Kelly)*



## CELEBRATE Social Work Month 2013!

from: <http://www.socialworkers.org/pressroom/swMonth/2013/theme.asp>

Submitted by CDR Julie A. Niven, LCSW, DCSW, MAC

The following is an excerpt from the NASW website about Social Work Month 2013. I don't believe I could have said it any better! Happy Social Work Month!

*Social Work is the profession of hope—fueled by resilience and advocacy. Social Workers matter because they help millions of struggling people every day dream differently.*

*In the United States, more than 650,000 of these highly trained professionals know how daunting and immobilizing life's tragedies and obstacles can be. But they also witness the sheer determination of countless individuals and families to achieve different lives. Sometimes, all it takes to help people get on the right path is guidance toward what is possible. Other times, social workers are an immediate lifeline in crisis—providing access to resources and new life options.*

*Those served by social workers possess many strengths that keep them fighting for a better future despite personal and systemic barriers to success. They climb toward what is possible rather than simply accepting what the current situation may be. Professional social workers help combine these client strengths with effective personal and public advocacy. It is with these concepts in mind that NASW has announced the theme for Social Work Month 2013 as "Weaving Threads of Resilience and Advocacy: The Power of Social Work."*

### **A Nation's Fabric**

*Our national fabric is comprised of many diverse lives. It is vibrant and strong because it has been woven from the stories of people from every continent into a compelling narrative of struggle, renewal, and success. Each thread helps make a brilliant tapestry that continues to be the envy of the world.*

### **Stronger Safety Nets**

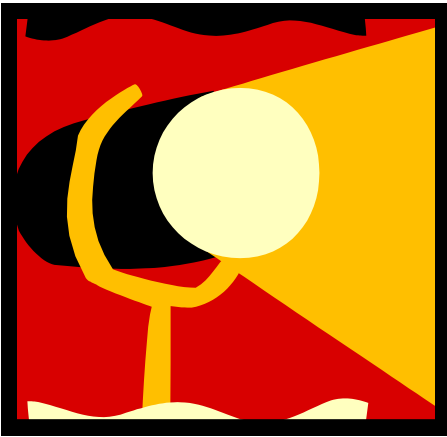
*Resilience and determination alone cannot overcome all crises, but weaving those strengths with targeted advocacy often can. The Social Work profession has a distinguished history of not only providing social safety nets to the most vulnerable, but also challenging systems that impede social mobility.*

### **Positive Futures**

*Stories of hope in the face of tragedy share a common theme: better times are ahead. Illness, loss, abuse, and poverty shape our lives in profound ways, but how we learn to deal with each circumstance can determine how much those experiences define our limitations—or our opportunities.*

resilience  
weaving  
advocacy





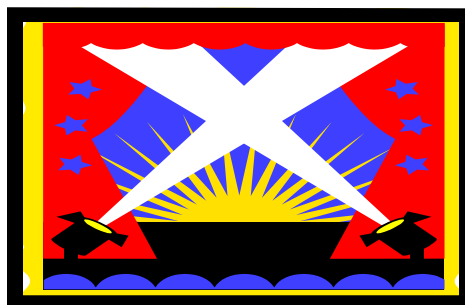
## **SPOTLIGHT On a Social Worker Making a Difference**

*Submitted by LT Stephanie Felder, MSW, LCSW*

LT Stephanie Felder was chosen by the College of Charleston to receive the 2013 Young Alumna of the Year Award. The Young Alumna of the Year Award recognizes an alumna or alumnus whose life has expressed the finest of College of Charleston traditions through service to church, community, or profession. The recipient must have been graduated within the last ten years. LT Felder is being honored with this prestigious award due to her hard work and dedication to helping veterans and progressive movement in her social work career. LT Felder served as the Health Care for Homeless Veterans (HCHV) Coordinator for the Fayetteville VA Medical Center, and appeared on NBC Nightly News, LA Times, NPR, and other local media stations advocating for ending homelessness among veterans. She is currently stationed at Substance Abuse Mental Health Services (SAMHSA) and will be starting her new position in the Crisis Counseling Assistance and Training Program within the Center for Mental Health Services. In addition, LT Felder is working on her Doctorate in Social Work at The Catholic University of America, and her research focus is homeless female veterans and understanding the role of trauma. LT Felder will present her latest research findings on homeless female veterans at the upcoming USPHS Symposium in May. The College of Charleston will be coming to Rockville, Maryland in the early summer to make a video of LT Felder, and capture her doing what she loves most—empowering communities to reduce the impact of substance abuse and mental illness. LT Felder will officially accept the Young Alumna Award November 21, 2013 at the awards Gala in Charleston, SC.



**Congratulations LT Felder!!**



# ...Other News ...



*The SWPAG Career Development (CD) Subcommittee actively seeks and disseminates information on career opportunities for professional development, vacancies, and special assignments. In an effort to accomplish its mission the CD Subcommittee has created a calendar that lists various trainings/webinars, conferences and continuing education credit opportunities that might be of interest to our members. More current months will contain the most information. You should check back frequently as we will update the calendar as we learn of CD offerings around the country. Please email questions/comments, suggestions for making the calendar better and information about trainings/webinars, conferences and continuing education opportunities to LCDR Maria Fields, Chair, SWPAG Career Development Subcommittee, at [maria.v.fields.mil@mail.mil](mailto:maria.v.fields.mil@mail.mil) Requests for more specific information about any of the events on the calendar should be directed to the event host.*

## ANYTIME

### Ethics

<http://www.aswb.org/education/courses/index.php>

### Ethics: Boundary Crossings and the Ethics of Multiple Role Relationships

<http://www.continuingcourses.net/active/courses/course066.php>

### Aging, Mental Health, and Long-term Care

<http://www.continuingcourses.net/active/courses/course041.php>

### Traumatic Brain Injury and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

<http://www.dcoe.health.mil/TrainingCalendar.aspx>

### The National Child Traumatic Stress Network

<http://learn.nctsn.org/course/category.php?id=3>

### Center for Deployment Psychology

<http://deploymentpsych.org/training/online-courses>



*The Mission of the U.S. Public Health Service  
Commissioned Corps is to  
protect, promote, and advance the health and safety  
of our Nation.*

For more information about our PAG, visit the SWPAG website at  
<http://usphs-hso.org/?q=pags/swpag>

### 2013 SWPAG Meetings

*27 March at 1400 EST*

*29 May at 1400 EST*

*31 July at 1400 EST*

*25 Sept at 1400 EST*

*4 Dec at 1400 EST*

\*\*\*\*\*

*From 1500 to 1600 ET*

*1-800-988-9486*

*Participant code: 13237*

### *SWPAG Colleagues:*

*The Communications Committee encourages officers to submit any news/events information about fellow social workers, something you've accomplished, clinical issues, job/agency opportunities, recruiting ideas or strategies, career enhancement suggestions, educational opportunities (CEU's), publicity events, deployment/OFRD training experiences, CCA events etc. for publication in the SWPAG newsletter. Please have submissions cut and paste ready.*

*Thank you!*

*Please respond to CDR Niven at:  
[julie.a.niven.mil@mail.mil](mailto:julie.a.niven.mil@mail.mil) with submissions*